

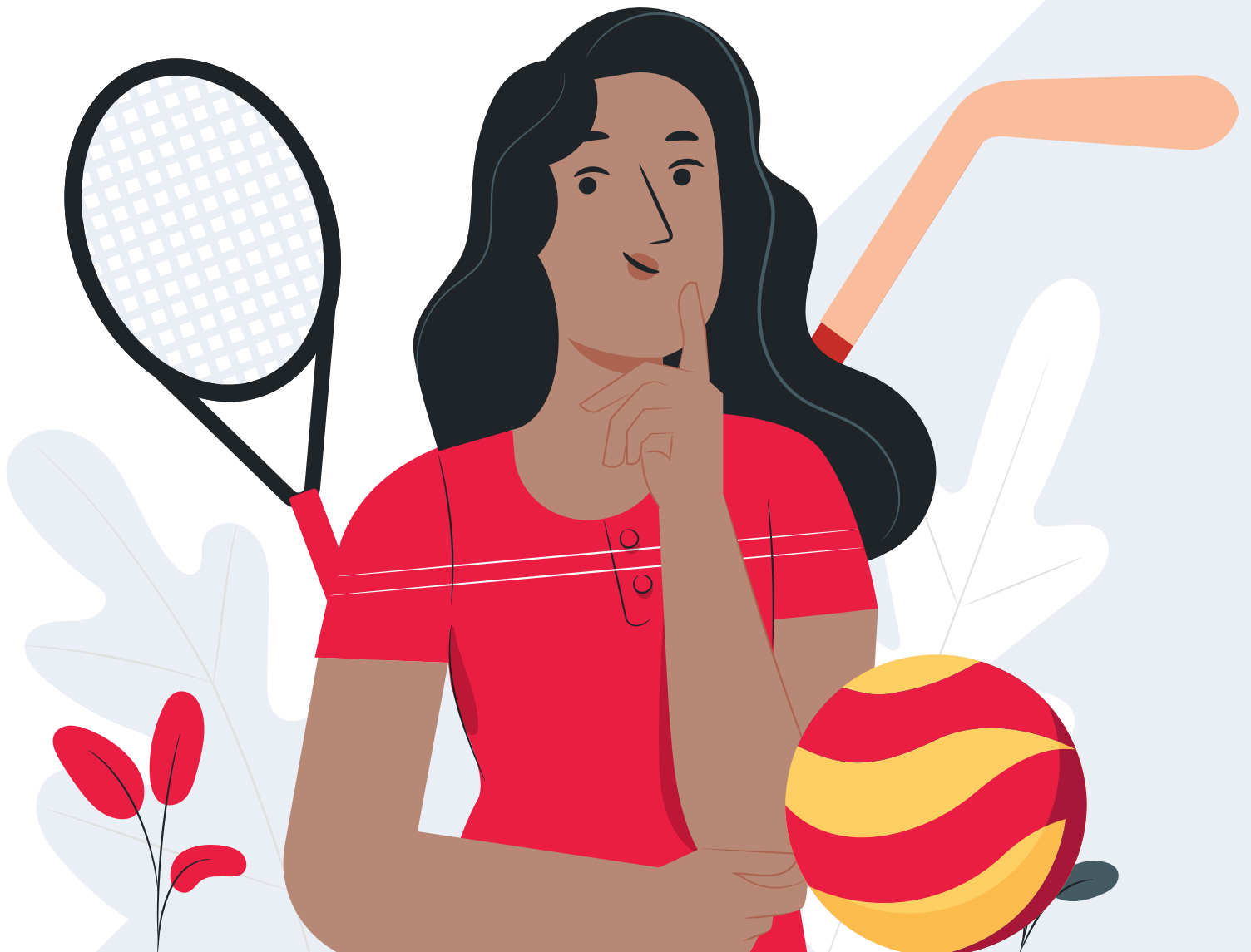


GAME PLAN
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MANAGING UNCERTAINTY WORKBOOK



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MANAGING UNCERTAINTY DURING COVID-19

CHECK-IN

Check in with how you're feeling. Check in with the facts on COVID-19 from a reputable source.

ACCEPT

Accept that things are the way they are, and perhaps not how you'd like them to be.

NAVIGATE

Drop an anchor amidst an emotional storm.

ADAPT

Modify your approach to physical, emotional and mental maintenance and preparation.

DISCUSS

Identify your support system, communicate your plan.

ACT

Adopt a values-driven approach to putting your new plan to action!

CHECK-IN WITH YOURSELF

What zone am I in right now?



Contact your Mental Performance Consultant or visit <https://www.mygameplan.ca/resources/health> for support, and, as a Canadian national team athlete and Olympic or Paralympic coach, you can call the Morneau Shepell helpline 24/7: [1-844-240-2990](tel:1-844-240-2990) for support



Self-Awareness Worksheet

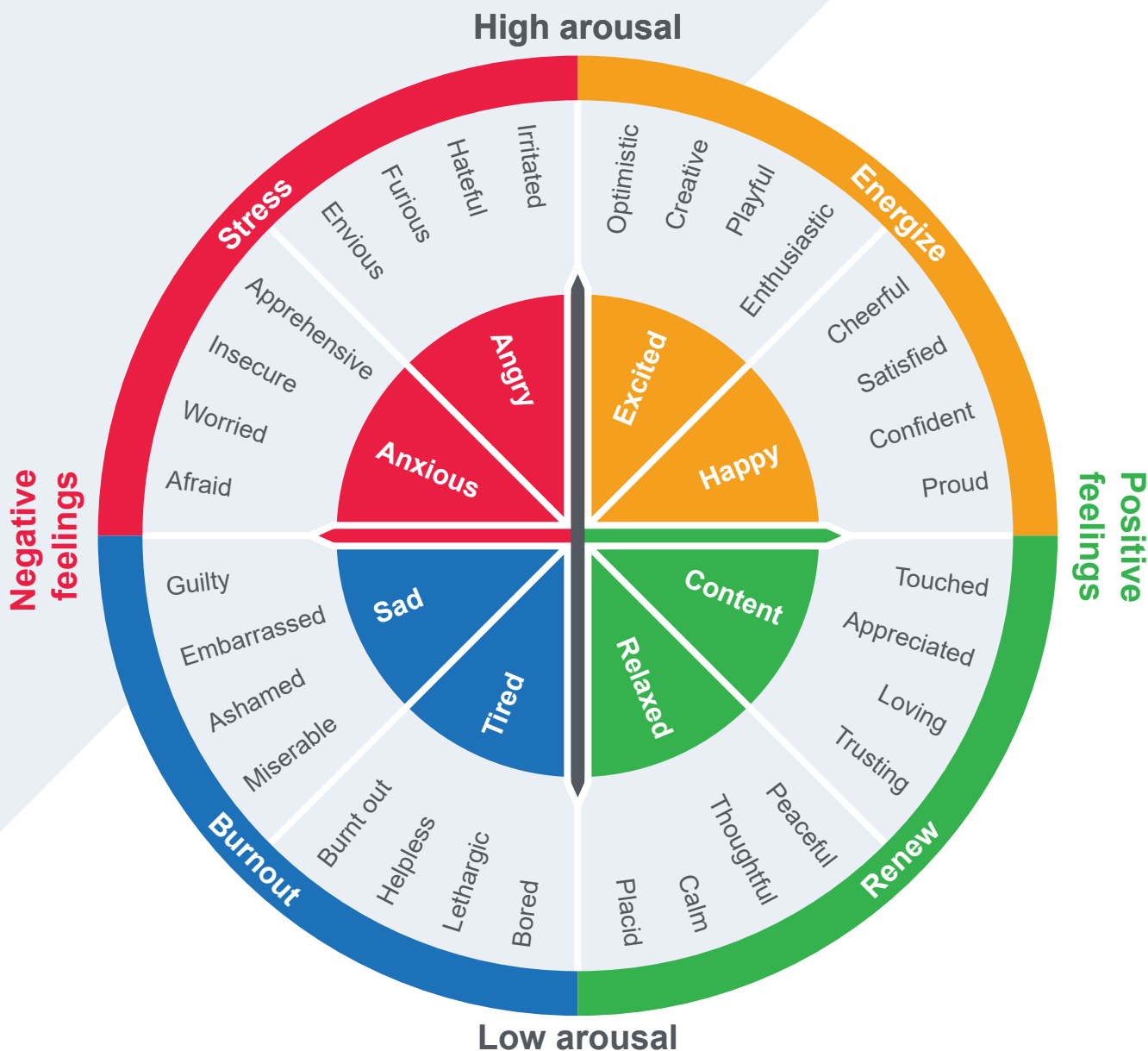
“Zones” represent physical, emotional and psychological states that we experience as we move through life. We may feel comfortable (green zone), challenged (yellow zone), or at a point where we need to stop, take a step back and re-evaluate (red zone). As high-performance athletes, we are generally good at noticing the physical signals (e.g., out of breath, lactic acid build up, dizzy) that indicate we are moving through these different zones during training and competition, and are well-trained in how to respond.

Generally, we're not as skilled at recognizing and labeling the behaviours, thoughts, and emotions we experience as we move through our comfort, challenge and stop zones during our daily lives. Often, we have been socialized to dismiss pain, push through discomfort, and suppress our emotional reactions (be stoic). But being able to recognize when we're not feeling like ourselves is an important skill and can prevent distress if we intervene early. Continued self-awareness is the foundation of mental health maintenance. In order to intervene when our mental health is declining, we first need to notice the “signals”.

EXERCISE: Complete the chart below to identify some of the behaviours, thoughts and feelings (signals) that correspond to your mental health zones. **REMEMBER:** Your signals are likely very different from others because many factors influence how we move through the world!

	COMFORT ZONE Explore the 'signals' that let you know you're in the green zone	CHALLENGE ZONE Explore the 'signals' that let you know you're in the yellow zone	STOP ZONE Explore the 'signals' that let you know you're in the red zone
IDENTIFYING YOUR “SIGNALS” Looks Like How am I behaving? How am I interacting with others? How do I look?	<i>For example:</i> - I am peaceful - I am patient with others - I am assertive - I smile often - I feel grateful to be alive	<i>For example:</i> - I am easily frustrated by others - I don't talk as much - I spend more time alone - I have trouble focussing - I need frequent, deliberate breaks	<i>For example:</i> - I lash out at others - I'm scared even though there is no visible threat to my safety - I worry constantly - I have trouble completing my daily tasks - I have difficulty sleeping
Sounds Like What am I saying to myself (inner monologue)? What am I saying to others?			
Feels Like What emotions and sensations am I experiencing?			

BUILD: Now that you're more aware of what it looks like, sounds like and feels like to move through your mental health zones, consider "checking-in" with yourself a few times during the day (e.g., when you wake up in the morning, before you go to bed in the evening, after working out). You can ask yourself: "what zone am I in right now?" / "How do I know?" Just like any other technical or tactical skill, self-awareness is a skill that can be developed – so check in often!





Acceptance is the active process of embracing all human experiences without trying to control or change them.



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“Accept” Attitude of Acceptance

Acceptance is the active process of embracing all human experiences, without trying to control or fight them (Henriksen et. al, 2019). When we cling to situations that are not our reality (e.g., expected preparation for the Olympic Games), we take up room and block those that may be coming next (e.g., effective physical or psychological training). It is not the presence or absence of undesired thoughts and emotions that predict performance outcomes, but rather our ability to accept these experiences and remain behaviourally and attentionally engaged with the task at hand (Gardner and Moore, 2007). When we learn to accept how we feel and think, we can move more clearly and deliberately toward committed, values-guided actions.

This worksheet invites you to lean into the process of self-awareness, labeling, and acceptance. Each thought and sensation you experience presents an opportunity to **ACCEPT** your thoughts and feelings, allowing you to make productive decisions about what to **DO** with those thoughts



Identify Your Thoughts and Sensations

First, you are invited to identify your **thoughts** and **sensations**. When you start identifying and naming your thoughts, you begin to create distance from them (Hansen & Haberl, 2019). Try writing out both the helpful/productive/positive and unhelpful/unproductive/negative thoughts and feelings you are facing, using the following prompts:

I am having the thought that...

e.g., I am having the thought that I may not be able to compete in the Olympics.
e.g., I am having the thought that my preparation is at risk of being compromised.

I am experiencing feelings of...

e.g., I am experiencing sensations of muscle tension
e.g., I am experiencing feelings of anxiety

Identify the Facts about Your Situations:

Next, you are invited to explore the **factual evidence** available to you regarding the event(s) or circumstances that have contributed to you experiencing these thoughts and sensations. Try writing out the facts about your current situation, using the following prompts:

Facts about my situations:

e.g., What is the World Health Organisation (WHO) saying about Covid-19
e.g., What are current best practices for training and preparation?
e.g., What is my 'new normal'?

The things I know...

e.g., I know that I have been taking all precautions to prioritize my health and the health of others (i.e., social isolation).
e.g., I know that I have been checking-in with myself regularly to expand my awareness of self.

Exploration of Control:

Finally, you are invited to review and reflect on the two lists you have made and brainstorm the elements of this situation that are within your control. Consider your environment (physical and online), social interactions and communication (physical and online), information intake, feelings, body sensations, thoughts, and actions. Try separating your lists into the following categories:

Within my control:

Outside of my control:

Accept all thoughts and sensations, as they are very real and your body's chosen response to your current situation. Shift your focus to those that are within your control, freeing up space and mental energy to be expensed on other, more productive tasks.

Next steps?

Chose to **DO** something with your control.

Chose to **FOCUS** on something within your control.

Chose to **REMIND** yourself often of the things within your control.

NAVIGATE

The 5-4-3-2-1 technique:

See 5 things

Touch 4 things

Hear 3 things

Smell 2 things

Taste 1 thing



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“Navigate”

Dropping an anchor amidst an emotional storm.

Grounding is a technique rooted in mindfulness that helps bring the mind away from challenging emotions and towards the present moment. You can use grounding techniques when you're feeling anxious, panicked, frustrated, or distressed in any way. Today we're sharing two tools to help you ground yourself in your senses.

1. The 5-4-3-2-1 technique:

5

Notice five things you can see

4

Notice four things you can touch

3

Notice three things you can hear

2

Notice two things you can smell

1

Notice one thing you can taste

2. A body scan

Tune in to the sensations in your body. Try it out with this guided meditation from https://youtu.be/_DTmGtznab4



It's time to adapt, we're here to help



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“Adapt”



Physical distancing has no doubt disrupted your plans for training and competition. Although the request from Public Health officials to minimize or eliminate contact with others is outside of your control, you can modify your training to meet these requirements while continuing to prepare for potential competitions ahead.

Here are some ways you can modify your physical, technical/tactical, and mental/emotional preparation while respecting social distancing guidelines.

Physical

- **Sleep:** Improve your sleep hygiene in order to boost your immune systems and allow yourself to perform optimally.
- **Workout of the day:** If you don't have access to a gym, modify your workouts (e.g., bodyweight only, using bands instead of bars, use heavy objects as weights).
- **Conditioning:** Work on your conditioning with long distance runs, cycles, sprints, hill-work or interval training and use this time to connect with nature.
- **Mobility:** Focus on improving your flexibility (try yoga for some mindfulness-infused stretching).

Technical/tactical

- **Fly solo:** Refine your individual technical skills (e.g., stick handling).
- **Throwbacks:** Review competition videos to stay connected to positive experiences and memories. Learn from what you were doing well and what you can improve.
- **Fancy footwork:** Focus on improving speed and agility with footwork drills and games.
- **Become a student of the game:** Review footage of the “greats” in your sport to learn from what they do exceptionally well.

Mental/emotional

- **Stay connected:** You can still communicate with your teammates and coaches virtually. Consider scheduling daily or weekly check-ins or virtual hangouts at times you would usually gather in person to maintain routine and social support
- **Self-care:** Engaging in activities that support your emotional, spiritual, physical and psychological well-being is more important than ever. Make a list of things you find enjoyable and relaxing (e.g., try a new relaxation technique or mindfulness program using an app)! Set a self-care goal for yourself each and every day!
- **Visualize:** Researchers have found that visualization is almost as effective as practice when it comes to skill acquisition and retention. Visualize yourself successfully performing key skills or sequences in training or competition by using all of your senses. Visualizing yourself accomplishing tasks is important, but it is also valuable to imagine how you will effectively respond to potential setback and barriers that could arise in the future.
- **Invest in yourself:** Take this time to learn more about yourself, spend time with yourself, and engage in activities that allow you to grow.
- **Get support:** If you already have a mental performance consultant (MPC), reach out for support. If you'd like to connect with an MPC, visit the CSPA website to find a qualified practitioner in your area (www.cspa-acps.com). Our team is also available via telehealth to support your mental health needs. Visit www.ccmhs-ccsms.ca/refer for more information.

EXERCISE: Your turn! What are some ways you can adapt your training for the next two weeks?

Things are changing rapidly amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, so it's important to tackle your training in small manageable chunks. Establish flexible goals to achieve along with a realistic training plan. Consider discussing this with your coaches, teammates, MPC, and/or other support staff.

DISCUSS

During challenging times talk to people you trust (virtually). Discuss your plans with your support network. You are not alone!



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Take action according to your goals and values.



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Values-driven behaviour

Values are the principles that guide our way of being (e.g., behaviour, decision-making, priorities) in all domains of life.

When our goals and behaviours are aligned with our values, we are taking committed action, leading us to experience satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, fulfilment, and contentment.

Committed action means behaving in ways that are motivated and guided by our values. It includes physical (e.g., *verbal/non-verbal language*) and psychological (e.g., *attitude*) components. Committed action moves us toward the people and things that we value.

Values vs. Goals

Values and goals can be related but are distinct concepts. For example, our values may inform the goals we choose to strive for. If life is a journey you can think of values as a compass reminding you of where your true North lies, while goals are “check-points” you want to hit along the way.

Identifying our values provides us with a compass by which to live, helping us to plan, set goals, and make difficult decisions in sport and life.

This worksheet will help you identify your values and guide you toward taking committed actions as you manage yourself and your environment during the COVID-19 pandemic

EXERCISE

A. Identify Your Values

1. Read through the list of values below (Table 1) and reflect on each word individually. Sit with each word for a moment and explore to what extent it resonates with you.
2. After your first read through, think about your life and your athletic performance. Ask yourself: How do I want to be in life and in sport? Circle the values that you feel reside at the core of your response to this question.
3. Make sure the values you chose are based on your personal beliefs and desires. Remember the difference between a value (i.e., principle guiding your way of being) and a goal (i.e., an aim or result you want to accomplish).

Table 1. List of Values (preferred ways of being)

Curious
Present
Persistent
Patient

Honest
Creative
Adventurous
Competitive

Brave
Friendly
Fair
Contributing

Responsible
Autonomous
Compassionate
Forgiving

Healthy
Hard-working
Generous
Cooperative
Balanced
Other:

Humble
Caring
Determined
Helpful
Challenged

Encouraging
Trustful
Supportive
Optimistic
Peaceful

Flexible
Grateful
Controlled
Self-aware
Respectful

List your top 3 chosen values below and indicate why they are important to you.

Value 1: _____

This value is important to me because: _____

Value 2: _____

This value is important to me because: _____

Value 3: _____

This value is important to me because: _____

B. Take Committed Actions:

When faced with challenging or uncomfortable situations, we can take actions that move us TOWARD (closer to) or AWAY (further from) from what we value. When we move toward the people and things we value, we are taking committed action (e.g., *deciding to train out of one's hometown rather than a Sport Centre in a different province is a committed action for someone who highly value being responsible, flexible, respectful, cooperative, and competitive*). Living by our values allows us to inevitably change what we can to improve a situation while making room for the challenges/struggles that go with it (important with some the elements of this COVID-19 situation). Making room refers to acceptance and self-compassion.

Using the top 3 values you identified in the previous exercise, identify the *committed actions* you can take to effectively manage yourself and your environment within the constraints of this COVID-19 situation. Remember, committed actions include physical and psychological components.

E.g., **Value 1: Responsible**

Committed Action: *I will adhere to national guidelines and engage in social distancing, including when training outside. I will encourage and support others in doing the same.*

Value 1: _____

Committed Action: _____

Value 2: _____

Committed Action: _____

Value 3: _____

Committed Action: _____